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Cayman Islands

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 15 December 2017. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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The Territory at a glance

Territory: The Cayman Islands is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administrative Power: Governor Helen Kilpatrick (September 2013)

Geography: Located some 290 km west of Jamaica and about the same distance south of Cuba, the Territory comprises three islands: Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and the adjacent Little Cayman.

Land area: 264 km^2

Exclusive economic zone: 119,137 km^2

Population: 61,361 (male 29,422 and 31,939 female (2016 estimate))

Life expectancy at birth: 81.1 years (male 78.4 years, female 83.9 years (2015 estimate))

Ethnic composition: Afro-European (40 per cent), African (20 per cent), European (20 per cent), other (20 per cent)

Languages: English

Capital: George Town

Head of the territorial Government: Premier Alden McLaughlin (May 2017)

Main political parties: Progressives, Cayman Islands Democratic Party

Elections: The most recent elections were held on 24 May 2017; the next elections are due in May 2021.

Legislature: Legislative Assembly (19 elected and 2 ex officio members)

Gross domestic product per capita: CI$ 48,371 (nominal, 2016 estimate)

Economy: International financial services and tourism

Main trading partners: United States of America

Unemployment rate: 4.2 per cent (2016 estimate)

Monetary unit: Cayman dollar, pegged to the United States dollar (CI$ 1 = US$ 1.20)

Brief history: The Territory, reportedly sighted by Christopher Columbus in the late fifteenth century, was first settled by the British between 1661 and 1671. A tradition of self-government gradually grew in the Territory beginning in 1734 and a legislative assembly was established in 1831 and was known as the Assembly of Justices and Vestry. Slavery was abolished in 1834. In 1863, the Cayman Islands became a dependency of Jamaica and, when the latter achieved independence 99 years later, the Islands remained under the British Crown.

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

1. Under the 2009 Constitution, the Governor, appointed by the British Crown, is responsible for external affairs, defence, internal security and the appointment of persons to the civil service.

2. The Legislative Assembly consists of the Speaker, 19 elected members and 2 ex officio members, the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General. The Speaker can be either an elected member of the Assembly who is not a minister or a person qualified to be an elected member of the Assembly. The Territory's Cabinet, chaired by the Governor, is composed of the Premier, six other ministers and two ex officio members, namely, the Deputy Governor and the Attorney General. The Premier is a member of the Assembly who is recommended by the party with the majority of seats and appointed by the Governor. The six other ministers are appointed by the Governor upon the advice of the Premier from within the elected membership of the Assembly.

3. During the general elections held in May 2017, Progressives won 7 of the 19 seats in the Assembly. The Cayman Islands Democratic Party won three seats and the remaining nine seats were won by candidates who ran as independents or as part of differing political groups. A coalition government, referred to as the "Unity Government", was formed with the seven members of the Progressives, three independent members and three members of the Democratic Party. As a result, the Leader of the Progressives, Alden McLaughlin, was reappointed as the Premier following an election in the Legislative Assembly on 31 May 2017.

4. The judiciary consists of a summary court (including a youth court), a coroner's court, a grand court and a court of appeal. The Summary Court has civil and criminal jurisdiction. Appeals from the Summary Court lie to the Grand Court, which is a superior court of record and administers the common law of England and Wales. Appeals from the Grand Court lie to the Court of Appeal, composed of a president and no fewer than two judges. Further appeals lie, in certain circumstances, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London. According to the administering Power, the Territory has also developed three "problem-solving" courts to deal with offenders with drug addiction or mental health problems or those who have committed offences in a domestic context.

5. As previously reported, in 2011, the Cayman Islands Review Committee issued a report entitled "United Kingdom and Cayman Islands Relationship Review". Among the central issues raised during the consultative exercise was a desire to achieve more local autonomy, while at the same time establishing a relationship that allowed for sustained support from the United Kingdom — for instance, in case of pressure from the international financial community.

6. In addition, as previously reported, at a meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2013, a former Premier of the Territory stated that the Cayman Islands had no mandate for independence, nor had the question arisen publicly.

II. Budget

7. Effective 1 January 2018, the Territory has modified its financial year cycle from July to June to January to December. The 2018 and 2019 budget document of the Territory, which covers a 24-month period from 1 January to 31 December in those years, respectively, forecasts a total operating revenue of CI$ 730.7 million and

operating expenditure of CI$ 644.1 million for 2018, and a total operating revenue of CI$ 722.8 million and operating expenditure of CI$ 657.8 million for 2019.

8. For the 18-month period 2016/17, the territorial Government estimates earning CI$ 934.8 million in total revenue (CI$ 26.3 million higher than the CI$ 908.5 million that was originally in the budget), while the operating and financing expenses are forecast at CI$ 879.8 million (CI$ 17.4 million higher than the original budget of CI$ 862.4 million). According to the administering Power, the territorial Government registered a forecast surplus of CI$ 55.0 million during the 2016/17 18-month period.

9. Since 2012, the United Kingdom and the Cayman Islands have been working together under a framework for fiscal responsibility that commits the Territory to prudent and transparent fiscal management through effective medium-term planning. According to the administering Power, the Territory complied with the required debt and cash reserve ratios specified in the framework by the deadline of 30 June 2016.

10. The Cayman Islands is a jurisdiction with no direct individual or corporate income tax. The principal sources of government revenue are import duties, financial services, licence fees, work permit fees and stamp duties. There is also an environmental tax on visitors.

11. The Cayman Islands is not eligible for territorial allocations under the eleventh European Development Fund but is eligible for non-programmed aid.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

12. The economy of the Cayman Islands is based on the provision of financial services — the dominant sector in the economy — and tourism. There are no commercial fisheries.

13. The 2016 gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated at CI$ 2.71 billion, compared with CI$ 2.63 billion in 2015. According to the Economics and Statistics Office of the Government of the Cayman Islands, the rate of growth of GDP at constant prices (2007) in 2016 was 3.5 per cent, compared with 2.8 per cent in 2015. Furthermore, according to the Cayman Islands 2017 semi-annual economic report, in the first half of 2017, the Territory's economy grew by 2.3 per cent, owing mainly to increased economic activity in construction, wholesale and retail trade, electricity and water supply.

B. Financial services

14. According to government statistics, the financing and insurance services sector accounted for 40.5 per cent of the Territory's GDP in 2016.

15. According to the Cayman Islands annual economic report for 2016, the Cayman Islands remained a key conduit for international finance, ranking eighth in the world based on the value of the banking sector's international position on assets and seventh based on liabilities. Bank and trust licences declined 13.6 per cent, from 184 in 2015 to 159 in 2016. The total number of insurers improved marginally, by 1 (0.1 per cent), to 740 in 2016, owing mainly to the rise in international (captive) insurers as domestic insurers decreased during the period under review. The total number of company

registrations in 2016 decreased by 2.6 per cent to 96,248, with new company registrations contracting for the first time since 2013, falling by 5.9 per cent to 11,174.

16. Following the conclusion of the bilateral arrangement with the United Kingdom on the exchange of beneficial ownership information, the Cayman Islands beneficial ownership regime came into force on 1 July 2017. This new legislation reflects the shared and mutual determination of the United Kingdom and the Overseas Territories, expressed in the exchange of notes of April 2016, to continue to tackle corruption, fraud, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and to further enhance transparency and law enforcement cooperation in the context of financial services. Under the law, companies incorporated or registered in the Cayman Islands are required to maintain a register of information about their beneficial owners or to file with the local competent authority the reason for which they are not required to maintain a beneficial ownership register. The centralized platform allows law enforcement and the local competent authorities to conduct instantaneous searches of the beneficial ownership registers of all companies incorporated or registered in the Cayman Islands, which in turn facilitates the swift sharing of information on beneficial owners with international law enforcement or the competent authorities.

17. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the United Kingdom-Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, held in London on 28 and 29 November 2017, the overseas territories and the United Kingdom welcomed the progress made by the overseas territories with financial centres in implementing the arrangements set out in the exchange of notes on law enforcement exchange of beneficial ownership information, including establishing new and secure systems for the collection, exchange and use of beneficial ownership data, where they did not already exist. The Joint Ministerial Council committed itself to reviewing the effectiveness of the arrangements six months prior to their implementation deadline. It welcomed the cooperation of the overseas territories in international efforts to promote tax transparency and tackle financial crime and the constructive engagement of the overseas territories with the Code of Conduct Group (Business Taxation) of the European Union and at the first meeting of the Global Forum on Asset Recovery. The Joint Ministerial Council reiterated its commitment to showing leadership in tackling corruption and committed itself to prioritizing further work to enable the timely extension to the territories of the application of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in particular when Territories have requested such an extension, and to set a clear path for that process, building on the meeting held during the seventh session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in Vienna from 6 to 10 November 2017.

18. According to the administering Power, the Cayman Islands has maintained its "largely compliant" rating in the 2017 (Second Round) Peer Review Report on the Exchange of Information, conducted by the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. In addition, the European Union Council of Ministers has identified the Cayman Islands as a cooperative jurisdiction for tax purposes. The European Union noted that the Cayman Islands, together with 46 other countries, can make further enhancements to prevent misuse. In the European Union's assessment of the Cayman Islands against three criteria (tax transparency; fair taxation; and implementation of the base erosion and profit shifting programme of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)), the European Union had no concern with the position of the Cayman Islands. With respect to the criterion on fair taxation, the European Union positively recognized that the Cayman Islands tax system does not differentiate on the basis of any factors such as residency.

However, the Cayman Islands has agreed to assess further the fair taxation criterion and has committed to work with European Union officials to address the issue by December 2018.

19. The Cayman Islands is a party to the Council of Europe-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters. The Cayman Islands is also a party to the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement on Automatic Exchange of Financial Account Information, on article 6 of the Convention. First exchanges under the OECD Common Reporting Standard were completed in September 2017.

C. Tourism

20. Expansion in the tourism sector contributed to the growth of GDP in 2016 and in the first half of 2017. Cayman Airways, along with other airlines, operates international services from various cities in Canada, Cuba, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, the United States and a number of European countries. Domestic airline services and charters operate between the three islands in the Territory.

21. In 2016, overall tourist arrivals were approximately 2.1 million, a marginal decline of 0.2 per cent as compared with 2015, owing mainly to a 0.3 per cent reduction in cruise arrivals, which were approximately 1.7 million. Stay-over arrivals remained relatively constant in 2016, at 385,451. Despite the lack of growth in 2016, the number of stay-over arrivals in the Territory has been on the rise since 2009, while overall arrivals are fluctuating between 1.7 million and 2.1 million. According to the territorial Government, in the first six months of 2017, total tourist arrivals were nearly 1.1 million, a decline of 7.1 per cent compared with the same period in 2016. Of those tourist arrivals, air arrivals increased by 3.7 per cent, from 210,490 to 218,235, while cruise arrivals fell by 9.4 per cent, from 973,305 to 881,929.

D. Agriculture

22. In 2016, the agriculture and fishing industries contributed CI$ 10.66 million to the GDP of the Territory, compared with CI$ 10.4 million in 2015, representing 0.32 per cent of total GDP in 2016.

23. The Department of Agriculture continues to encourage local agricultural production through the provision of technical support, education and assistance to farmers. According to the administering Power, one of the key initiatives that the Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture and Lands will be working on to support the strategic objective of having a strong agriculture sector is the completion of the Cayman Islands Food and Nutrition Security Policy, which was begun in the previous Administration. It is the intention that the Ministry — in consultation with relevant stakeholders — will review the draft policy report, engage in further consultations with stakeholders, and then present the final draft to Cabinet for approval.

E. Infrastructure

24. According to official data, the number of building permits granted in 2016 increased by 9.2 per cent, from 736 in 2015 to 804. Similarly, the value of building permits rose from CI$ 186.9 million in 2015 to CI$ 247.0 million, a growth of

32.1 per cent. A total of 972 proposed projects were approved at a value of CI$ 406.7 million in 2016, compared with 990 projects at a value of CI$ 458.8 million in 2015.

25. According to the administering Power, the Grand Cayman road network consists of approximately 515 travel lane km with approximately 58 km of primary arterial roads and 95 km of secondary arterial roads.

26. According to the 2016–2017 budget policy statement of 30 May 2016, the redevelopment project of Owen Roberts International Airport is expected to be completed by mid-2018.

F. Telecommunications and utilities

27. Currently, four telecommunications companies provide fixed and/or mobile voice and data services and three companies provide subscription television services. There are 15 FM radio broadcasting stations in the Territory. According to the administering Power, as at 30 June 2017, the total number of fixed and mobile telephone handsets had increased by 4.8 per cent to 130,042. Over the same period, the number of fixed high-speed broadband connections increased by 0.3 per cent to 50,645.

28. On Grand Cayman, where the Caribbean Utilities Company has a non-exclusive licence for electricity generation and an exclusive licence for its transmission and distribution, almost all power generation relies on imported diesel. In October 2015, the Electricity Regulatory Authority approved a 5 MW solar power purchase agreement between an independent power producer and the Caribbean Utilities Company to provide energy to power some 800 homes with renewable solar energy. According to the administering Power, the project is scheduled to be completed in early 2017. Furthermore, since 2011, Grand Cayman has had a consumer-owned renewable energy generation programme, which allows consumers to generate energy from renewable sources and to be compensated through stable, long-term rates, with a current capacity limit of 6 MW, increased from 4 MW in 2016. On Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, the Cayman Brac Power and Light Company has exclusive licences that are scheduled to be renegotiated in 2017–2018. Official statistics indicate that net electricity production in 2016 increased from 623,700 MW hours to 650,300 MW hours, or 4.3 per cent, as compared with 2015, while electricity consumption rose from 582,000 MW hours to 607,700 MW hours, or 4.2 per cent, as compared with 2015.

29. According to official data, in 2016 water consumption in the Cayman Islands increased by 7.9 per cent to approximately 1.9 million gallons, while water production rose by to 2.2 million gallons, or 13.9 per cent, from 1.9 million gallons in 2015.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

30. According to information provided by the administering Power, in the fiscal year ending 30 June 2016, approximately 2,000 families received some form of welfare service.

31. According to the administering Power, to provide a more effective response to the social issues within the Territory, the Ministry of Community Affairs, Youth and Sports continues to strategically realign the services offered under its ambit, with specific focus on child safeguarding. The Needs Assessment Unit provides welfare services, inclusive of food, housing, rental and burial, to Caymanians in need. In addition, the Department of Children and Family Services manages clinical services (such as care and protection investigation, assessment and monitoring of cases that involve child abuse, foster care and adoption and custody assessments), programme services (including the provision of residential services to adults with special needs and persons with disabilities, community development and disaster preparedness), as well as services to senior citizens. In May 2016, the territorial Government established the Child Safeguarding Board, comprising relevant government agencies and persons representing non-governmental bodies, as a forum for those agencies to work together to improve the management of child protection in the Cayman Islands.

32. According to the administering Power, the Department of Counselling Services continued to enhance its services to address more effectively a broader range of emerging needs in society through, for example, community-based therapy, counselling services that were restructured to provide more effective responses to the growing number of persons in need, a newly introduced music therapy programme, parent coaching, skills-building workshops and other programmes.

B. Labour and immigration

33. According to government statistics, in 2016 the labour force numbered 42,196 persons, comprising 19,931 Caymanians (47.2 per cent of the labour force) and 22,265 non-Caymanians (52.8 per cent). Total employment in 2016 was estimated at 40,411, 3.3 per cent higher than that of the previous year. The unemployment rate among Caymanians increased from 6.2 per cent in 2015 to 7.1 per cent in 2016, while that among non-Caymanians declined from 2.5 per cent in 2015 to 1.7 per cent in 2016. The territorial Government estimated that the unemployment rate as at spring 2017 was 4.1 per cent.

34. The independent Minimum Wage Advisory Committee, appointed by Cabinet under the provisions of the Labour Law (2011), presented its final recommendations on establishing a minimum wage regime for the Cayman Islands in February 2015, which were accepted by the Government. An hourly minimum wage of CI$ 6 was established as at 1 March 2016 through the Labour (National Minimum Basic Wage) Order 2016. The Economics and Statistics Office, in conjunction with the Ministry of Human Resources and Immigration and the Ministry of Community Affairs, conducted the Occupational Wage Survey 2017 in the public and private sectors for all occupations. Results from the survey will be used primarily to assist the Ministry of Human Resources and Immigration in developing a comprehensive employment and compensation database.

35. As previously reported, the Territory's Immigration Law was amended in 2013 to effect changes, among other things, to the grant of permanent residence, the expiration of the term-limit exemption permit for key employees and the tenure of specialist caregivers.

36. Government statistics indicate that the number of work permits for non-Caymanian workers increased by 2.4 per cent, from 22,756 in 2015 to 23,298 in 2016, and that the number in the first half of 2017 increased by 5.6 per cent compared with the same period in 2016.

C. Education

37. Education is compulsory for all resident children between 5 and 16 years of age. The public education system caters to about two thirds of Caymanian children, with the remainder attending fee-paying schools. According to the administering Power, non-Caymanian children can access the public system only in exceptional circumstances. Two public and two private institutions provide tertiary education. Students from overseas territories benefit from the home student rate for school fees at British universities, provided that they have lived in a British overseas territory, the European Economic Area or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first academic year of their course of study. In addition, those students have access to funding provided by the European Union for higher or vocational education.

D. Public health

38. Health insurance is compulsory in the Cayman Islands. The Territory's Health Services Authority is responsible for the provision of all public health care. According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Authority is the sole provider of public health care services at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of service.

39. According to information from PAHO, in July 2016 the Mosquito Research and Control Unit released genetically modified mosquitoes in the West Bay area of Grand Cayman. Standard mosquito control measures are expected to continue during the project, and if the project is successful at reducing the number of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes, consideration will be given to releasing the mosquitoes across Grand Cayman.

40. At its sixth meeting, the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council welcomed the fact that the Department of Health of the United Kingdom had continued its support for and commitment, in partnership with the territories and Public Health England, to raising awareness of international health regulations and to developing the relevant capacity to respond to major public health incidents, including outbreaks. The United Kingdom and the overseas territories discussed the importance of raising awareness of and building capacity and expertise in the territories for tackling non-communicable diseases, such as obesity and mental health problems, and the impact of those challenges on the populations of the territories. They committed themselves to working together on those important issues so as to share best practices and resources on preventive approaches and the ways in which they could be adapted to respond to local needs.

E. Crime and public safety

41. The 452-strong Royal Cayman Islands Police Service is headed by a commissioner, who reports to the Governor.

42. According to the official statistics provided by the territorial Government, in 2015, overall reported crime decreased by 6.7 per cent compared with the previous year, from 3,948 incidents in 2014 to 3,685 in 2015. According to the administering Power, the number of serious crimes in 2015 dropped to 860, compared with 921 in 2014, a decrease of 6.6 per cent. Burglary continues to be a persistent problem, with 767 burglaries recorded in 2015, a slight decrease from the 777 recorded in 2014.

43. In addition, there were 1,068 traffic accidents in 2015, a 10.3 per cent increase in the 968 accidents reported in 2014. The number of fatalities increased from 4 in 2014 to 12 in 2015.

44. The official statistics from the territorial Government indicates that the offences dealt with under the Youth Court in 2016 decreased to 49 from 98 in 2015. The number of juvenile convictions in 2016 fell to 42 (35 men and 7 women), compared with 64 (52 men and 12 women) in 2015.

45. The Cayman Islands Monetary Authority is the body responsible for monitoring compliance with international financial standards in the Territory and for reporting findings to the territorial Government on a regular basis. An anti-corruption commission was established under the Territory's Anti-Corruption Law (2008).

46. In 2017, the United Kingdom continued to provide funding for a law enforcement adviser based in Miami, United States of America, who coordinated, managed and facilitated training and the provision of strategic advice in order to introduce new techniques and skills to the Territory's law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, RFA *Mounts Bay* has been stationed in the Caribbean since January 2017, as part of the North Atlantic patrol tasking of the Royal Navy, ensuring a year-round maritime presence of the United Kingdom and providing humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and crisis communications support in the region. The ship also worked with other regional navies and coast guards to combat illegal activities on the high seas. RFA *Mounts Bay* and HMS *Ocean* provided vital humanitarian relief to the region, in particular to the three Territories — Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands — affected by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, in September.

F. Human rights

47. The Human Rights Commission was established under section 116 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 and appointments were first made in January 2010. The Commission's primary responsibility is to promote understanding and observance of human rights in the Cayman Islands. In addition, the Commission has powers to accept and investigate public complaints regarding potential breaches of human rights, to provide a forum for mediation or conciliation, to give advice and guidance and to publish reports of its own initiative on human rights issues. It is an independent body that is not subject to the direction or control of a person or an authority.

48. Part 1 of the Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 setting out the Bill of Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities came into effect on 6 November 2012, with the exception of the provisions relating to the segregation of prisoners (both unconvicted from convicted prisoners and juvenile from adult prisoners), which came into effect on 6 November 2013. According to the administering Power, a number of claims to redress alleged human rights violations have been determined by the courts, including some claims challenging the compatibility of legislation with the Bill of Rights.

49. The Territory is subject to several major human rights conventions and instruments to which the administering Power has acceded, including the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Gender Affairs Unit, a section of the Ministry of Education, Employment and Gender Affairs, is the focal point within the Cayman Islands Government for addressing the issue of gender mainstreaming. Through the Unit, the Ministry provides sector-specific gender training, public education efforts, and gender-awareness training and analysis of the policies, operations and programmes within the Ministry and other government entities as required.

50. The Cayman Islands Disability Policy 2014–2033 was developed with the vision of ensuring that persons with disabilities could live with dignity, be respected and have the opportunity to participate fully in society. According to the administering Power, the Legislative Assembly passed the Disabilities (Solomon Webster) Law on 24 October 2016 to implement parts of the Policy and to provide a further layer of protection of the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities beyond the scope provided for in the Constitution and other existing laws. In particular, the Law provides for the establishment of a national council for persons with disabilities with oversight of policy implementation and the creation of a voluntary disabilities register to improve the quantity and quality of available data on persons with disabilities in order to inform policy, legislation and services.

51. According to the administering Power, the Cayman Islands Older Persons Policy 2016–2035 was approved by Cabinet on 21 October 2016 to advance the well-being of older persons in all aspects of life, including lifelong education, family and community-based support services, autonomy and self-fulfilment, gender issues, health, employment and legal protection.

52. At the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories discussed their shared resolve to continue to promote respect for human rights and compliance with international obligations in the territories. In the communiqué adopted at that meeting, they welcomed the constructive engagement of the territories in the preparations for the universal periodic review process of the Human Rights Council in that regard. The leaders of the overseas territories also reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the highest possible standards for the protection of children and promotion of children's welfare in the territories. At the meeting, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories discussed progress made in promoting interagency cooperation in the territories and the development of national response plans to define policy priorities, noted the particular challenges for those territories affected by the recent hurricanes and agreed that children's welfare should remain a central priority for recovery plans, including through the reconstruction of schools. In addition, they welcomed progress made under a memorandum of understanding to promote more effective collaboration between the overseas territories for the safeguarding of children.

V. Environment and disaster preparedness

53. The Cayman Islands are included in the United Kingdom ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Department of Environment works, together with other agencies, to ensure that the Territory's natural resources are preserved and protected. Hazard Management Cayman Islands, a government agency, has overall responsibility for the Territory's hazard management programme, including preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery. An annual hurricane exercise is

conducted prior to the hurricane season, which runs from 1 June to 30 November, in addition to exercises related to other hazards.

54. Increasing recreational and artisanal fishing in the shallow waters around the Cayman Islands continues to represent a threat to the Territory's marine environment. The National Conservation Law (2013) aims to protect and conserve endangered, threatened and endemic plants and their habitats, as well as the variety of wildlife in the Cayman Islands. The National Conservation Council was established in 2014 by the Law and to facilitate its goals. Furthermore, the Department of Agriculture collaborates with the Council to protect the agricultural sector from the introduction of invasive alien species that could have a negative impact on crop and livestock production, as well as public health and national flora and fauna, such as the Cayman blue iguana, which, until recently, had been reduced to just a few.

55. Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015, the territorial Government initiated a review of its draft national energy policy of 2013 and draft climate change policy of 2011, which were aimed at facilitating the transition to a climate-resilient, low-carbon economy. In 2017, the National Energy Policy 2017–2037 was introduced. According to the Premier of the Cayman Islands, the vision of this policy, "Enhancing and embracing a sustainable lifestyle through responsible and innovative energy supply and consumption", provides a framework for sustainability of the Territory's energy sector. The policy focuses on exploiting renewable energy, promotes energy efficiency and conservation measures and supports energy security by reducing reliance on imported fossil-based fuels.

56. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Governments of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories recognized that the destruction wrought by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria had served as a reminder of the vulnerability of the overseas territories to climate change-related events and the devastating effect that they could have on the lives and livelihoods of those who lived there. They committed themselves to continuing the practice of mutual engagement ahead of international forums on climate change, to ensure that the views and priorities of the overseas territories were fully reflected in negotiations. It was agreed that a representative from the territories would attend the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Katowice, Poland, from 3 to 14 December 2018, as part of the delegation of the United Kingdom, highlighting the value of their presence in helping to amplify the shared message of the need for a high degree of ambition on climate change-related targets. The United Kingdom reiterated its commitment to working with the overseas territories on the issue of extending the application of treaties concerning climate change to the territories, including taking forward the work to extend its ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention to those territories that had indicated their readiness for it, through initial consultation with territories that had an interest in participating in meetings concerning the Paris Agreement to be held in the first half of 2018. The importance of work in the territories on climate change adaptation and mitigation and collaboration between the territories to share best practices on environmental management and climate change issues, including through the annual meetings of ministers of the environment of the territories, was emphasized.

VI. Relations with international organizations and partners

57. The Cayman Islands is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and a member of the Universal Postal Union. The territory also participates in the work of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as an associate member and is a member of the Caribbean Development Bank and the International Olympic Committee. In October 2016, the Cayman Islands hosted, for the first time as an associate member of CARICOM, the annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture, in collaboration with the secretariat of CARICOM and the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.

58. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, the Territory is associated with but not a part of the European Union. Since January 2014, the Territory has been a partner under the 2013 Overseas Association Decision of the Council of the European Union, which was approved, among other things, in an effort to move away from a classic development cooperation approach to a reciprocal partnership that promotes sustainable development and the values and standards of the European Union in the wider world. According to the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories continued their dialogue on the implications for the latter of the decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union (known as "Brexit"). In addition, it was indicated that a clear objective of the exit negotiations was to achieve an agreement that worked for all parts of the United Kingdom family, and the United Kingdom affirmed that it would seek to ensure that the security and economic sustainability of the overseas territories was preserved and, where possible, strengthened post-"Brexit".

VII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

59. Information on the position of the territorial Government regarding the future status of the Cayman Islands is reflected in section I above.

B. Position of the administering Power

60. At the 8th meeting of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), on 9 October 2017, during the seventy-second session of the General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the relationship of the Government of the United Kingdom with its overseas territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British. He said that the territories were an integral part of global Britain and the commitment of the United Kingdom to its territories' security and prosperity remained strong, as demonstrated by the swift and comprehensive response to the devastation wreaked in some territories by Hurricane Irma and the ongoing recovery efforts.

61. The representative of the United Kingdom went on to say that the Joint Ministerial Council was the primary forum for high-level political dialogue between the United Kingdom and the overseas territories. As the United Kingdom negotiated to leave the European Union, it was fully committed to taking into account the

priorities of the overseas territories, including Gibraltar. The United Kingdom-Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council on European Union negotiations had been established to discuss the priorities of the territories and determine further areas for collective engagement. He added that the fundamental responsibility of the Government of the United Kingdom, under international law and the Charter of the United Nations, was to ensure the security and good governance of the territories and their peoples.

62. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories indicated that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, applied to the peoples of the overseas territories. They reaffirmed the importance of promoting the right of the peoples of the territories to self-determination, a collective responsibility of all parts of the Government of the United Kingdom. They committed themselves to exploring the ways in which the overseas territories could maintain international support in countering hostile sovereignty claims. For those Territories with permanent populations who wished it, the United Kingdom would continue to support their requests for removal from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories agreed that the fundamental structure of their constitutional relationships had been the right one — powers were devolved to the elected Governments of the territories to the maximum extent possible consistent with the United Kingdom retaining those powers necessary to discharge its sovereign responsibilities. They also agreed upon the need to continue their engagement on those issues to ensure that constitutional arrangements worked and were developed effectively to promote the best interests of the territories and of the United Kingdom.

VIII. Action taken by the General Assembly

63. On 7 December 2017, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/100 on the question of the Cayman Islands without a vote, on the basis of the report of the Special Committee (A/72/23) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the General Assembly:

(a) Reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of the Cayman Islands to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(b) Also reaffirmed that, in the process of decolonization of the Cayman Islands, there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which was also a fundamental human right, as recognized under the relevant human rights conventions;

(c) Further reaffirmed that it was ultimately for the people of the Cayman Islands to determine freely their future political status, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection called upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

(d) Recalled the 2009 Constitution of the Cayman Islands, and stressed the importance of the work of the Constitutional Commission, including its work on human rights education;

(e) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public awareness outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard called upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

(f) Welcomed the active participation of the Territory in the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

(g) Encouraged the Territory to continue to participate in the activities of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, including regional seminars;

(h) Stressed the importance of the Special Committee being apprised of the views and wishes of the people of the Cayman Islands and enhancing its understanding of their conditions, including the nature and scope of the existing political and constitutional arrangements between the Cayman Islands and the administering Power;

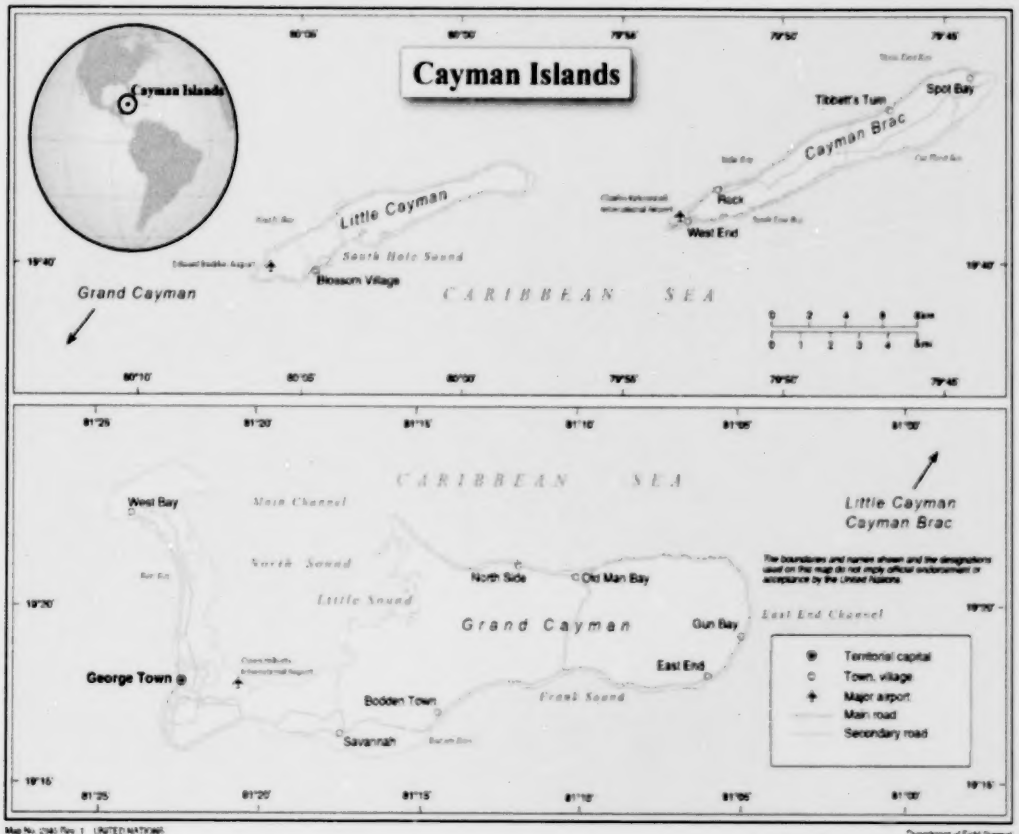
(i) Called upon the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in the Cayman Islands, and encouraged the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;

(j) Reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and preserve the cultural identity of the Territory, and requested the administering Power to take steps to enlist and make effective use of all possible assistance, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, in the strengthening of the economy of the Territory;

(k) Took into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, stressed the importance of fostering the economic and social sustainable development of the Territory by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development, while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration, restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges, and strongly urged the administering Power to refrain from undertaking any kind of illicit, harmful and unproductive activities, including the use of the Territory as a tax haven, that are not aligned with the interest of the people of the Territory;

(l) Requested the Territory and the administering Power to take all measures necessary to protect and conserve the environment of the Territory against any degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to monitor environmental conditions in the Territory and to provide assistance to the Territory, consistent with their prevailing rules of procedure;

(m) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of the Cayman Islands and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and on the implementation of the present resolution.


Cayman Islands
Cayman Islands
Tibbett's Turn
Spot Bay
Cayman Brac
Little Cayman
Rock
West End
South Hole Sound
Blossom Village
Grand Cayman
CARIBBEAN SEA
CARIBBEAN SEA
Little Cayman
Cayman Brac
West Bay
Main Channel
North Sound
North Side
Old Man Bay
Little Sound
Grand Cayman
Gun Bay
East End Channel
East End
George Town
Bodden Town
Frank Sound
Savannah
Territorial capital
Town, village
Major airport
Main road
Secondary road